

In the Claims:

DI 1. (Canceled)

2. (Canceled)

3. (Canceled)

4. (Previously amended) The couple of claim 24, wherein the coupling device comprises a wall portion defining an aperture that is dimensioned and configured to receive adjoining upstanding posts of each instrument organizer when the at least one upstanding posts of each instrument organizer are disposed in juxtaposition.

5. (Currently amended) The couple of claim 24, wherein the coupling device comprises a collar including a wall portion having a generally rectangular outer configuration in cross section and defining an aperture having a generally rectangular configuration for receiving two the at least one upstanding posts of each of the pair of instrument organizers and wherein each of the at least one upstanding posts has having a cubical outer configuration.

6. (Canceled)

7. (Canceled)

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8. (Canceled)

9. (Canceled)

10. (Canceled)

11. (Canceled)

12. (Canceled)

13. (Canceled)

14. (Canceled)

15. (Canceled)

16. (Canceled)

17. (Canceled)

18. (Canceled)

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19. (Canceled)

20. (Canceled)

21. (Canceled)

22. (Canceled)

23. (Canceled)

24. (Currently amended) A couple for coupling a pair of instrument organizers each of which comprise:

an elongated base structure having a top surface, ~~and~~ a front surface and a rear surface, the front surface and the rear surface each extending from the top surface, and the front surface and the rear surface each being disposed on opposing sides of the base structure, the elongated base structure comprising a predetermined width as measured from the front surface to the rear surface and the elongated base structure including opposed terminal ends;

at least one upstanding post fixedly positioned at one of the terminal ends of the base structure; and

at least one movable stabilizing structure comprising a body portion and self-gripping means extending away from the body portion and having at least a portion of which engage the front and rear surfaces of the base structure for

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stabilizing and supporting at least one surgical instrument in a generally upright state at least partially on the organizer and the self-gripping means having a length that is not greater than a height of the base structure;

the couple, comprising:

a coupling device for connecting the pair of instrument organizers together.

25. (Currently amended) The couple of claim 24, wherein the elongated base structure of each instrument organizer is dimensioned and configured to support only one end of the at least one surgical instrument, the elongated base structure of each instrument organizer also being dimensioned and configured to be mounted on a planar support surface which supports another end of the at least one surgical instrument.

26. (Previously added) The couple of claim 24, wherein:

the body portion of each instrument organizer includes an upwardly extending post comprising a first side surface and a second side surface that each define a plane that extends in a direction that is generally perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the elongated base structure when the movable stabilizing structure is mounted to the elongated base structure;

the self-gripping means of each instrument organizer comprises a pair of self-gripping legs that each include a first side surface and a second side surface each of which defines a plane that also extends in a direction that is

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generally perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the elongated base structure when the movable stabilizing structure is mounted to the elongated base structure; and

the plane defined by the first side surface of the upwardly extending post of each instrument organizer and the planes defined by the first side surfaces of the self-gripping legs are generally coplanar and the plane defined by the second side surface of the upwardly extending post and the planes defined by the second side surfaces of the self-gripping legs are generally coplanar.

27. (Previously amended) The couple of claim 24, wherein the elongated base structure and the movable stabilizing structure of each instrument organizer is composed of a lint free foam plastic.

28. (Previously added) The couple of claim 24, wherein the coupling device is composed of a lint free foam plastic.

29. (Currently amended) A couple for coupling a pair of instrument organizers for at least partially supporting surgical instruments each of which comprise:

an elongated base having a uniform, predetermined width and defining a continuous surface extending from a first side surface to an opposing second side surface thereof, the elongated base including two terminal ends;

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at least one fixed end post extending from one of said terminal ends of the base; and

at least one movable stabilizing structure including two self-gripping legs extending generally parallel to each other and from a central body, the self-gripping legs having opposing, inwardly facing surfaces spaced-apart a distance substantially equal to the predetermined width of the base of the instrument organizer, the opposing, inwardly facing surfaces of the two self-gripping legs being dimensioned and configured to solely grip the first and second side surfaces of the base of the instrument organizer, respectively, so that the movable stabilizing structure is attachable to the base of the instrument organizer and the central body is held in place by the self-gripping legs for retaining the surgical instruments in an organized and upright state partially on the organizer; and wherein:

the central body of the movable stabilizing structure includes an upwardly extending post comprising a first side surface and a second side surface that each define a plane that extends in a first direction that is generally perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the elongated base when the movable stabilizing structure is mounted to the elongated base;

each self-gripping leg of the movable stabilizing structure including a first side surface and a second side surface each of which defines a plane that also extends in a second direction that is generally perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the elongated base when the movable stabilizing structure is mounted to the elongated base; and

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the plane defined by the first side surface of the upwardly extending post and the planes defined by the first side surfaces of the self-gripping legs are generally coplanar and the plane defined by the second side surface of the upwardly extending post and the planes defined by the second side surfaces of the self-gripping legs are generally coplanar;

the couple, comprising:

a coupling device for connecting the pair of instrument organizers together.

30. (Previously added) The couple of claim 29, wherein the coupling device comprises a wall portion defining an aperture that is dimensioned and configured to receive adjoining end posts of each instrument organizer when the end posts are disposed in juxtaposition.

31. (Currently amended) The couple of claim 29, wherein the coupling device comprises a collar including a wall portion having a generally rectangular outer configuration in cross section and defining an aperture having a generally rectangular configuration for receiving adjoining two end posts of each instrument organizer and wherein each end post has having a cubical outer configuration.

32. (Previously added) The couple of claim 29, wherein the elongated base and the movable stabilizing structure of each instrument organizer is composed of a lint free foam plastic.

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33. (Previously added) The couple of claim 29, wherein the coupling device is composed of a lint free foam plastic.

34. (Previously added) The couple of claim 29, wherein a height of the elongated base of the instrument organizer is greater than a length of the self-gripping legs such that a bottom surface of the central body will grip the continuous surface of the elongated base.

35. (Previously added) The couple of claim 29, wherein a height of the elongated base of the instrument organizer is approximately equal to a length of the self-gripping legs such that a bottom surface of the central body will grip the continuous surface of the elongated base.

36. (Previously added) The couple of claim 29, further comprising a double sided self adhesive strip attached to a bottom surface of the elongated base of the instrument organizer.
